1. (Currently Amended) A method of operating a multiservice packet based switch including redundant switching cores, said method comprising the steps of:

providing a plurality of ingress and egress communications traffic flow controllers, each of said ingress ~~and egress~~ flow controllers directing one or more threads of said communications traffic over one or another of said redundant switching cores;

monitoring communications flow paths traversing ones of said ingress flow controllers, one of said redundant switching cores and corresponding ones of said egress flow controllers;

detecting a failure in one of said communication flow paths at an egress flow controller in said failed flow path; and

switching said flow path to a protection path via another of said switching cores, whereupon flow paths that are unaffected by said failure remain in place and do not switch cores;

wherein said ~~flow path switching step includes a substep of causing an~~ egress flow controller in said failed flow path operates to detect said path failure and to effect said switching of said failed flow path to said protection path independently of communication with a corresponding ingress flow controller, said path switching being thereby transparent to said corresponding ingress flow controller ~~to cause an address of the failed flow path to be mapped in an address table to an address for said protection path, and vice versa~~.

13. (Currently Amended) A packet based multiservice switch device, comprising:

at least two redundant switching cores;

a plurality of ingress and egress communications traffic flow controllers, each of said ingress flow controllers directing one or more threads of communications traffic over one or another of said redundant switching cores;

said flow controllers monitoring communications flow paths traversing ones of said ingress flow controllers, one of said redundant switching cores and ones of said egress flow controllers, whereupon detection, at an egress flow controller, of a failure in a monitored link ~~corresponding to one of said communication flow paths~~ produces switching of ~~a respective one of~~ said failed flow path ~~paths~~ from said one switch core to a protection path via said another switch core, and further whereupon said flow paths that are unaffected by said link failure remain in place and do not switch cores;

wherein said ~~flow path switching includes causing an~~ egress flow controller in said failed flow path operates to detect said path failure and to effect said switching of said failed flow path to said protection path independently of communication with a corresponding ingress flow controller, said path switching being thereby transparent to said corresponding ingress flow controller ~~to cause an address of the failed flow path to be mapped in an address table to an address for said protection path, and vice versa~~.